Maintenance of National Highways

248. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government experience hurdles in the maintenance of National Highways;

(b) whether there is a proposal to hand over National Highways to the State Governments; and

(c) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Government does not experience any hurdle in maintenance of National Highways except for constraint of funds.

(b) and (c) The responsibility of development and maintenance of National Highways rests with the Central Government as per the National Highways Act, 1956. However, the works of development and maintenance are carried out by State Governments on agency basis on behalf of Central Government for the National Highways entrusted to them.

New universal safety fund

249. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are creating a new universal safety Fund, under the aegis of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on the recommendation of the empowered group on infrastructure;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to create a separate safety reserve for all Highway projects that were to be undertaken through the new concession agreement;

(c) whether the proceeds from tolls and cess on petrol and diesel would be utilized for financing this fund; and

(d) whether existing Highway Projects on Golden Quadrilateral etc., which were in the first phase of National Highway Projects, also be covered under this fund?